

three decades later, to fully extend the franchise to Asian Americans. It was with this history in mind that the Voting Rights Act of 1965 was designed to make the right to vote a reality for all Americans.

Despite this track record of suffering familiar to all minority groups in America, we must not forget the positive history of Asian Americans.

Congresswoman MENG, the sponsor of this bill, put it best when she recalled how:

"Chinese Americans fought for the Union at the Battles of Antietam and Gettysburg during the American Civil War and Japanese Americans comprised the 442nd Regimental Combat Team during World War II, which became the most decorated unit in the history of the U.S. Military."

"While Chinese and Japanese Americans have demonstrated valor and bravery, they have also faced institutionalized disenfranchisement that manifested in U.S. laws such as the Chinese Exclusion Act and Executive Order 9066 that ordered the internment of Japanese Americans during World War II. Yet, from the first wave of Southeast Asian refugees on our shores to the Filipino Americans who helped found the farmworker labor movement—AAPIs have left an indelible mark on our American story."

"From these Halls of Congress to every American classroom, our AAPI heroes such as Grace Lee Boggs—a human rights activist for seven decades; Larry Itliong—the quintessential leader for labor rights and justice; Dalip Singh Saund—the first Asian American elected to Congress; and Patsy Mink—the first woman of color elected to Congress, and the original champion of Title IX protections in the Higher Education Act, have fought for human and civil rights and social justice with their every breath. Shamefully, these stories are starkly missing from the narrative of American history."

Mr. Speaker, these stories must not continue to be unknown to so many Americans. This bill would put an end to that shameful practice, so I am proud to support it and urge my colleagues to as well.

RECOGNIZING THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE GABRIEL A. RODRIGUEZ AMERICAN LEGION POST NO. 1928

HON. BRIAN HIGGINS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 27, 2022

Mr. HIGGINS of New York. Madam Speaker, today it is our honor to recognize the contributions and service of the Gabriel A. Rodriguez American Legion Post No. 1928 as they celebrate their first annual dinner this April.

American Legion Post No. 1928 was chartered in 1986 and for the last 36 years has honored the American Legion's foundational pillars of programs and activities that support Americanism, National Security, Children & Youth, and Veteran Affairs & Rehabilitation.

Just a few months after the Post was founded by Hispanic American veterans in Western New York, the Legion was renamed the Gabriel A. Rodriguez American Legion Post No. 1928, in honor of their fallen Vietnam War veteran, friend and brother affectionately known as Gabe.

As a member of the United States Army's 25th Infantry Division, Gabriel Rodriguez spent over a year in the Qui Nhon region of the Republic of Vietnam. But his service didn't stop there. Upon his return home he joined the New York National Guard where he would serve from 1971 to 1977.

Gabe suffered from Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) as a result of his wartime experiences which led to his passing in 1981. To honor his legacy, the Gabriel A. Rodriguez Post serves as a place of comfort and community for all veterans including those experiencing PTSD today.

The Gabriel A. Rodriguez American Legion Post members' commitment to serving veterans and the community is impactful and unwavering. They helped lead the national push to award the Borinqueneers the Congressional Gold Medal, organized food distribution events during the pandemic, and regularly reach out to help fellow veterans receive the benefits and medals they've earned.

Madam Speaker, for the members of the Gabriel A. Rodriguez American Legion Post No. 1928, a commitment to service didn't end following their honorable discharge from duty. It continues today and our community and country are better thanks to their ongoing care and efforts.

CELEBRATING ODESSA'S 120TH ANNIVERSARY

HON. CATHY McMORRIS RODGERS

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 27, 2022

Mrs. RODGERS of Washington. Madam Speaker, I rise today to celebrate the 120th anniversary of the founding of Odessa, Washington. To outsiders, Odessa may seem like a small rural town in Eastern Washington, but to those of us who know it well, it is a town full of entrepreneurial spirit, love for America, and passionate people—past and present.

First settled in the 1880s by cattlemen, Odessa is nestled in the Channeled Scablands of Eastern Washington, which is one of the seven wonders of the Evergreen State. Shortly after, the Great Northern Railroad was built, and railroad officials sought to attract immigrants to buy up land, grow wheat, and ship the crop by rail. This transformed the town from a painted sign to a booming economy.

Homesteader George Finney, seeing the potential for greatness, donated his land to establish Odessa in 1899. He was right. In just a few short years, more immigrants arrived, participating in the local economy and growing the town culturally and spiritually.

Today, Odessa is a vibrant community that more than 1,000 residents call home. The town's rich tradition of hard work and grit makes it a shining example of small town America and the hope of a better future. With approximately 80 percent of Odessa residents able to trace their ancestry to the Black Sea and Volga Germans, the town will celebrate their 51st annual Deutschesfest this September with authentic German food, live music, a city-block large biergarten, parades, and a street fair.

As the representative in Congress for this one-of-a-kind town, I am so inspired by Odessa's dedication to keeping its heritage alive

through education. The residents are committed to ensuring their kids become the next generation of leaders and entrepreneurs, just like their ancestors. On this most special day, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing Odessa's 120 years of remarkable history and celebrating their personification of the American spirit.

IN CELEBRATION OF HENRY THACKER "HARRY" BURLEIGH

HON. CAROLYN B. MALONEY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 27, 2022

Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York. Madam Speaker, I rise today to celebrate the contributions of Henry Thacker "Harry" Burleigh of the great state of New York. The newly christened Harry T. Burleigh Place in Gramercy Park celebrates a man who dedicated his life to enhancing lives through music singing, composing and social justice. This well-deserving recognition honors the indelible impact Mr. Burleigh, known widely as the Father of Spiritual Music, left on New York and communities around the world.

Born in 1866 and growing up in Erie, Pennsylvania as a young African-American baritone singer, Harry Burleigh traveled to New York City and applied to the National Conservatory of Music to study with well-known Director and composer, Antonin Dvorak. His exceptional talent was recognized, and a scholarship awarded to Mr. Burleigh in 1892 enabled him to gain experience editing recordings and developing his classical spirituals. One of these was "Deep River" a spiritual composition from 1917 which is recognized all over the world to this day.

Tragically, Mr. Burleigh's life was spent under the heinous abuses of Jim Crow, and the systemic discrimination of "separate but equal" endemic to it. Yet in the face of these challenges to his rights and liberties, Mr. Burleigh always led with his talents and tireless work ethic, earning him many glowing accomplishments throughout his life. In 1894, Mr. Burleigh auditioned at St. George's Episcopal Church at 4 Rutherford Place in Manhattan, which still stands proudly today within my district and holds concerts celebrating Burleigh's compositions annually. Church member J.P. Morgan insisted that St. George's hire Mr. Burleigh, and so became the church's Choral Director. He would continue to introduce and play his classical spiritual music there for 52 years. Concurrently he integrated Temple Emanu-El, now Congregation Emanu-El, for a quarter of a century. In 1895, Mr. Burleigh made it a point to personally test the strength of newly passed civil rights laws in New York by asking for service at 25 establishments.

From 1908 onward, he sang for King Edward VII in London, performed on Mayor La Guardia's weekly radio show Talk to the People, and composed over 200 pieces encompassing the classical spiritual music genre. The renowned Dvorak 'Symphony No. 9 (From the New World) credits the incorporation' and soulfulness of Burleigh's spiritual works. Mr. Burleigh was also a distinguished chartered member of the American Society of Composers, Authors and Publishers (ASCAP) bestowed with great public honors. He received

the 1917 N.A.A.C.P. Spingarn Achievement Medal, and honorary Doctorate of Music from Howard University and Atlanta University in 1920. In addition, Mr. Burleigh mentored Paul Robeson, Marion Anderson, Roland Hayes and Enrico Caruso who would go on to make their own exciting contributions to our nation's musical story.

Mr. Burleigh's legacy of social justice lives on through The Harry T. Burleigh Society. Formed in 2017, the society continues Burleigh's important legacy of disrupting boundaries and challenging social norms to address issues of our time. The Center for Peace, Equity & Justice at Friends Seminary School in New York City, coordinated an education/postcard campaign that was sent to Community Board Six in Manhattan, further highlighting his importance in American social justice to our beloved city.

The co-naming on September 12, 2021 at the South East corner of 16th Street and Third Avenue, Harry T. Burleigh Place, stands now as a testament to his important work as a baritone soloist, choral director, music arranger, editor, mentor, and a New York Community leader.

Harry Burleigh contributed so much to New York and the world, adding his sonorous and unique brand of spiritual signing to our ever-growing chorus of American culture. I am pleased to add my own voice to that chorus today in recognition and remembrance of this great man.

CELEBRATING 20 YEARS OF THE PARTNERSHIP OF DOUGLAS COUNTY GOVERNMENTS (PDCG)

HON. KEN BUCK

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 27, 2022

Mr. BUCK. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize the 20th anniversary of The Partnership of Douglas County Governments (PDCG). The PDCG consists of nine local government entities working collaboratively for the greater good of Douglas County's 380,000 residents on impactful issues, projects, and programs.

During the last 20 years, through their collective allegiance to a single mission, the group has focused on creating better communities for their constituents. Since its inception, PDCG accomplishments have included: the Housing Partnership and the Youth Initiative; the Douglas County Mental Health Initiative; collaborative emergency management and public safety; transportation improvements; open space, parks, trails, and recreation initiatives; health and human services programs; as well as specific public health efforts, such as their 18-month COVID-19 Community Response.

In 2017, the International City/County Management Association (ICMA) nominated PDCG for both the Strategic Leadership & Governance Award and the Community Partnership Award. PDCG also works together to strengthen community bonds and protect its citizens. It is a privilege to have such an organization in Colorado's Fourth District.

The dedicated members of the Partnership of Douglas County Governments serve our community in countless ways every day. Madam Speaker, I am honored to recognize their hard work and determination.

HIGHLANDS CONSERVATION REAUTHORIZATION ACT OF 2022

SPEECH OF

HON. SHEILA JACKSON LEE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 26, 2022

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H.R. 2793, the "Highlands Conservation Reauthorization Act of 2022." The Highlands Conservation Act, a bipartisan land conservation program funded through the Federal Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF), protects critical conservation areas in the Mid-Atlantic Highlands of Pennsylvania, New Jersey, New York, and Connecticut. The Highlands is a nationally significant landscape that yields benefits and resources to more than 11 million Americans.

A boon to our agriculture and tourism economy, the bill authorizes the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) and the U.S. Forest Service to work together to help the Highland states, local governments, nonprofits and private forest and farm landowners to conserve the land and natural resources of the Highlands region, helping to lower costs for local farmers and preserve open spaces.

Since 2007, \$70 million in funding has been awarded through the Highlands Conservation Act Grant Program to the four States, including \$20 million to New York. The program has helped preserve nearly 11,000 acres in the Highlands region, including over 4,000 in the state of New York alone.

This bill will improve upon the already popular land conservation partnership projects made possible by the Highlands Conservation Act Grant Program. In consultation with conservation groups and the FWS, the Highlands Conservation Reauthorization Act:

Reauthorizes this important program through 2028 with \$20 million in annual funding.

Authorizes set-aside funding for the FWS to administer the program in a manner consistent with appropriations and other administered FWS programs.

Includes a process in which states can petition for new areas to be included in the Highlands region, thus allowing for expansion of the eligible areas.

Provides states with more complete information of what areas are ecologically connected.

Allows the petition process to be administered on a rolling basis to eliminate possible bottlenecks.

Gives FWS approval authority in the petition process, to remain consistent with how the program is currently administered.

Allows the FWS to modernize the science of conservation resource values in the region.

Responsible conservation is important for maintaining this country's beautiful lands. Mr. Speaker, the Highlands Conservation Reauthorization Act of 2022 achieves such ends, so I am proud to support this significant piece of legislation and urge my colleagues to as well.

RECOGNIZING JEAN HAMIL, NATIONAL PRESIDENT OF THE VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS OF THE UNITED STATES AUXILIARY

HON. BRIAN HIGGINS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 27, 2022

Mr. HIGGINS of New York. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor Jean Hamil for her position as National President of the Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) of the United States Auxiliary. Jean Hamil has had a rewarding career in serving the Auxiliary in a plethora of capacities and her work has impacted veterans across the United States, including those veterans who are a part of our very own community in Buffalo.

Jean Hamil's father, George W. Nunnery, is a Korean War Veteran who served in the U.S. Navy from 1952 to 1973. Her father's service allowed her to become a Life Member of the East Seminole County Auxiliary 10139.

In addition to working as the Auxiliary, District and Department President, Jean Hamil has worked on the national level, serving as a National District Council Member and the National Director of the Membership Program. She is also a life Member of the VFW National Home for Children and a member of the Military Order of the Cooties Auxiliary, which works to serve struggling families.

In addition to being National President of the VFW Auxiliary, Jean Hamil is employed by the Food Safety & Environmental Compliance for A. Duda & Sons, Incorporation as a Manager.

By combining her lifelong passion of supporting our veterans, with her hobby and love of quilting, Jean Hamil formed a small group called the "Quilting Angels." The group creates quilts for veterans at the Orlando VA Healthcare Center, Quilts of Valor-Orange and Seminole counties, as well as for children who are located at the Safe House center and seniors in Seminole County.

Madam Speaker, it is an honor to recognize the hard work of Jean Hamil. Her hard work and dedication to our veterans throughout her rich career is something to truly admire, and something to continue to be grateful for as she continues her service as the National President of the Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) of the United States Auxiliary.

RECOGNIZING THE HISTORIC PARTNERSHIP BETWEEN WASHINGTON STATE UNIVERSITY AND SCHWEITZER ENGINEERING LABORATORIES

HON. CATHY McMORRIS RODGERS

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 27, 2022

Mrs. RODGERS of Washington. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize the historic partnership between Washington State University (WSU) and Schweitzer Engineering Laboratories (SEL).

On Monday, April 18, 2022, Washington State University announced a gift of \$20 million from Dr. and Mrs. Ed Schweitzer and Schweitzer Engineering Laboratories. This is